7 SEP 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Committee Members

STAT   FROM   : _____
                           Secretary, Executive Committee

        SUBJECT   : Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting,
                           17 August 1979

        1. Mr. Carlucci chaired the meeting, which was held primarily
to consider the proposed terms of reference for an Agency information
handling planning study. (Alternate representatives present included
STAT   Messrs. May, Stein, Zellmer, and _____ O/EEO was not represented.)

        2. Mr. May traced the developments leading to the creation of
the information handling task force and its charge to conduct a one-year
study to develop a comprehensive information handling strategy for the
STAT   Agency. _____, one of the task force members, then outlined
the proposed problem statement and terms of reference for the study.
He saw the main problem as the need for a reconciliation of the demand
versus the supply of information services, a strategy for investment,
and appropriate institutions to execute the strategy. Expanding on
the general perception of the problem, he noted that senior managers
are seen as making major system decisions, often without the needed
funds, with insufficient background in this rapidly changing technical
area. Related projects are considered in isolation, precluding optimization
of Agency resources. In response to questions and comments, _____
assured members that the problem statement was not intended to imply a
predetermined conclusion that information handling should be centralized.
Mr. May noted, however, that the study itself represented a centralized
approach to information handling.

STAT   3. _____ said that the task force would develop a 10-year
strategic plan (whose lifespan will probably be much shorter than 10 years
but longer than the current budget cycle) with a dual focus on the use
and provision of information handling services. The 12-month study,
which will involve minimal outside contract support, will include seven
tasks:

        -- with each Agency component that provides information
           services, develop a coherent and consistent repre-
           sentation of its services and plans;

        -- analyze the above plans to identify required coordination;

— develop with each component a representation of its
plans for the use of information services;

— analyze and aggregate the projections for the use of
information services and the identification of issues
related to the use of these services;

— correlate the planning for the provision and use of
information services;

—— analyze the resulting matrix to develop various
applicable planning strategies for Executive Committee
consideration; and

— based on guidance received from the Executive Committee,
finalize the strategic plan to be submitted for Committee
review and approval.

4.   Mr. Carlucci noted that the task force could get drawn into
making detailed operational decisions. Acknowledging that possible

STAT   pitfall, ⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛ said that the group was striving to confine its
efforts to devising a high level plan, not making detailed operational
decisions. When appropriate, the task force would put two Agency compo-
nents in touch with one another but would not take part in any subsequent
decisionmaking. It would not be involved in validating component infor-
mation handling needs, only in surveying them.

5.   Highlighting the characteristics of a good "strategic plan,"

STAT   ⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛ noted the importance of establishing goals and objectives.
These must be based on a clear appraisal of the current state of infor-
mation handling in the Agency, which will be difficult to develop.
As issues are surfaced during the study, the task force will try to
clarify them and bring them to the Committee's attention with recommen-
dations for possible courses of action. The task force will not try
to resolve these issues themselves.

6.   Issues which the study will include, but not be limited to, are:

— Management—to what degree can central management of
information handling contribute to the provision of
information services?

—— Standards—to what degree can standardization contribute
to the efficiency and effectiveness with which infor-
mation services are provided?

— Structure—to what degree should technology influence
Agency organization?

—— Compartmentation—to what degree can systems and data
bases be shared without jeopardizing security and
compartmentation?

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Some concern was expressed about technology being used as an excuse to tamper with organizational structure. [ ] said that his group would remain neutral on that issue.

7. Outlining the milestones for the task force's study [ ] noted that the time frame was long enough to ensure a worthwhile product but short enough to preclude institutionalizing the task force and risking its becoming an additional part of the problem. Messrs. Carlucci, [ ] and Hicks suggested that the task force should bring issues and suggestions to the Committee earlier than scheduled. Similarly, Mr. Zellmer recommended that the task force bring candidate goals and objectives to the Committee as they are identified. Mr. May assured the Committee that specific problems and issues will be brought to the Committee when warranted.

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8. In response to Mr. Carlucci's question about the modest consulting support suggested, [ ] explained that the task force did not have sufficient resources to manage extensive contract support. Secondly, the Agency needs to develop the in-house skills required to understand the information handling problem. He noted that the terms of reference of the study were similar to planning efforts recently outlined in an IBM course on strategic planning. In response to comments and questions, [ ] said that in about four months the task force would have an interim report, including a summary of the issues surfaced up to that point, and a glossary of terms. Mr. Carlucci approved the terms of reference as presented.

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9. [ ] outlined the second agenda topic, revising senior management titles to eliminate the confusion stemming from the proliferation of senior officials referred to as "Deputies." A suggestion was tabled to rename the "Deputy Directors for ____" as "Directors of ____" and to use "Deputy Directors of ____" instead of "Associate Deputy Directors for ____" for the number two positions. On the plus side, the proposed changes would eliminate the confusion caused by having two consecutive managerial layers with the same titles (Deputy Director) and would emphasize the managerial roles of the current four Deputies as heads of their components. On the minus side, unless the titles of the Community Deputies were also revised, the changes could be misconstrued as placing the Agency Deputies at a lower level than the Community Deputies. Mr. Carlucci asked those present to consult with their principals and advise the Committee Staff whether or not they favored the suggested revisions. The meeting was adjourned.

cc: A/DDA
    D/ODP

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